

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02

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FM AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2031

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMCONSUL LUANDA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LOURENCO MARQUES 0448

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MOPS, MILI, MZ

SUBJ: LARGE NUMBERS OF BLACK AFRICAN TROOPS BEING TRAINED

BY PORTUGUESE

REF: LOURENCO MARQUES 238

1. ON JULY 7 IN SIMPLE CEREMONY AT NEWLY CONSTRUCTED TRAINING GROUND 25 KMS OUTSIDE DONDO FOR GRUPOS ESPECIAIS (GES) AND GE PARACHUTISTS (GEPS), GENERAL KAULZA DE ARRIAGA WAS AWARDED BERETS BY REPRESENTATIVES OF BOTH GROUPS.

2. MOST IMPRESSIVE FEATURE WAS SHEER SIZE OF GROUP OF GE AND GEP TRAINEES LINED UP ON PARADE GROUND. APPROXIMATELY 5,000 TRAINEES, ALL VOLUNTEERS, PLUS ABOUT 360 VETERAN GES AND GEPS, PARTICIPATED. THIS IS APPROXIMATELY FIVE TIMES AS MANY TRAINEES AS WERE PRESENT AT SIMILAR CEREMONY IN DONDO LAST APRIL (REFTEL). I WAS TOLD THAT NEXT GROUP OF TRAINEES WILL BE EVEN LARGER. TO ACCOMODATE THE INCREASED NUMBERS, HUGE NEW TRAINING CAMP HAS BEEN BUILT. PORTUGUESE SEEM TO BE PUSHING AHEAD WITH THEIR DECLARED INTENTION OF CREATING VOLUNTEER BLACK AFRICAN TROOPS ON LARGE SCALE.

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EM COMMENT: PORTUGUESE UTHORITIES ARE APPARENTLY SUFFICIENTLY

CONFIDENT OF RETAINING LOYALTY OF TROOPS TOUNDERTAKE
RISK OF TRAINING WHAT WILL EVENTUALLY BE SIZEABLE BLACK
MILITARY FORCE. OF ANTICIPATED ROUGH TOTAL OF 60,000 MEMBERS
OF ARMED FORCES BY END OF YEAR GE AND GEP VOLUNTEERS, PLUS
BLACK MOZAMBICANS DRAFTED INTO ARMY MAY REACH 35,000. TO THIS
SHOULD BE ADDED RURAL GUARD (PREVIOUSLY CALLED INTERVENTION
MILITIA) NUMBERING WELL OVER 15,000, AND UNDETERMINED NUMBER
OF PROTECTION MILITIA AND AUTO-DEFENSE GROUPS, PLUS SPECIAL
TROOPS SUCH AS FLECHAS BEING TRAINED BY DGS, BRINGING TOTAL
OF ARMED BLACK AFRICAN MILITARY AND PARA-MILITARY FORCES
INTO NEIGHBORHOOD OF 75,000, OR HIGHER, THUS FORMING A POTEN-
TIAL POWER BASE WHICH PORTUGUESE MAY FIND DIFFICULT TO CONTROL.
VAN OSS

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